

Dairyland



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Madera County

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A

HISTORY

of the

DAIRYLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

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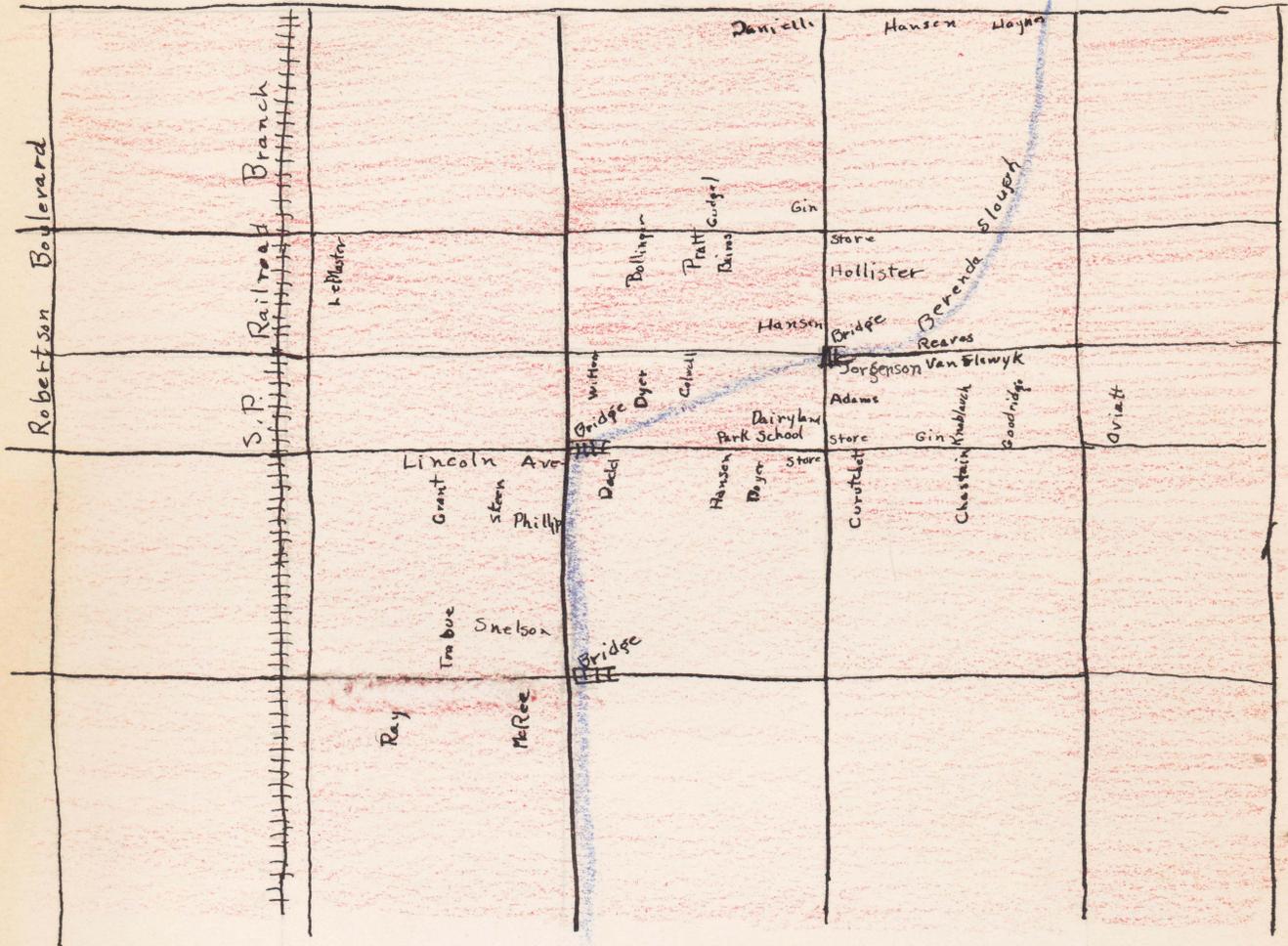
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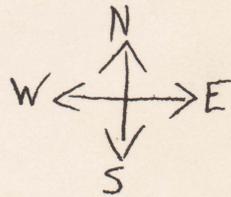
This little history we dedicate
to the ~~mem~~ory of those pioneers who
worked so hard to give us our
beautiful school grounds.

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Dairyland





I. Organization and History of School District

Early in the year 1915 there were several families living in the northern part of Munich District or what is now called Dixieland. These families were anxious for their children to have an education without having to ride to Chowchilla on the train as they had done the past year. Mr. M.M. Dyer, Mr. Gus Briner and Mr. Cleland were appointed by County Superintendent Cunningham to arrange for organization. A section of Munich was organized and named the Dairyland District. This name was given to the district by the U.S. Land Co. who owned many sections here.

School opened in September, 1915, in a house owned by Mr. Hummel now called the DeSpain house. In a few months school was held on the school ground in a renovated warehouse made of galvanized iron. Later $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres were given by the land company for the school grounds.

The first teacher was Miss Pfau, a sister of Mrs. Buffington. School opened with nineteen pupils.

The same board that had been appointed were elected at the first school election which was held in a tent.

A bond election was held and \$2500 raised to build the school house. Mr. Lane was the architect and carpenter. A 2 room building was decided upon by the board and when

school opened in September, 1916, they were housed in the new building.

Miss Mayme Brothers was the new teacher but as the attendance increased to 45 pupils it was necessary to hire another teacher..

Mr. O.A. Robertson, the founder of the colony, was a friend to the new district and when funds were not available to pay the new teacher's salary, he advanced three-fourths of the necessary amount and the Ladies Improvement Club paid the other fourth.

The school board, with wisdom and foresight, decided to purchase the land around the school for play grounds and a park. Here, again, Mr. Robertson came to their aid and sold them the $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres needed at a reasonable price of \$750. The purchase of this land and its subsequent development has made Dairyland one of the finest schools and grounds in the San Joaquin Valley. Mr. Dyer, and Mr. Briner were on the school board during these trying years of organization.

By 1920, the attendance had increased so that another building was required. This building, consisting of two rooms, was completed under the direction of Mr. Briner, Mr. Blacow and Mr. Wills who were on the board.

Our beautiful park of sycamore and eucalyptus trees were planted when Mr. Phillips, Mr. Howard and Mr. Campbell were the Board of Directors. This park has been used for years as a picnic ground by many organizations. Tables and benches and a platform were provided by the Ladies Club and a stove for barbecuing was built. This has

been wantonly destroyed by shiftless, disloyal people.

A vineyard of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres containing many varieties of grapes was planted as a Demonstration Vineyard and numerous exhibits were sent to Fairs from this plot. It is still a source of enjoyment and the proceeds form a special fund very valuable to the District.

Under the present Board of Directors, Mr. Reaves, Mr. Hollister and Mr. Van Elswyk, the school has been further improved by putting in overhead lighting, an oil burner and remodeling the auditorium. Now, there are four well equipped school rooms with modern desks and primary chairs and tables. The lavatory space has also been increased.

Dairyland has a spacious lawn for children to play on, beautiful trees under which lunch is eaten, three ball diamonds, a rock-a-bye, teeters, swings, bars, and rings. Good gloves, mitts, and balls and bats are provided as well as jumping ropes and playground balls.

The present staff of teachers consist of Mrs. Gertrude Jorgenson, Principal, Miss Dorothy Colwell, Miss Anna Johnson, and Mrs. Grace Trabue. The average daily attendance for 1937-1938 is 106.

We deeply regret that Miss Colwell will not be here next year. She has accepted a position in the Chowchilla School system. Miss Johnson has also decided to leave. She intends to be married in the future and expects to make her home at Redlands, California.

II. Boards of Directors and Dairyland Teachers

The following gentlemen have served on the School Board at various times. Messrs M.M. Dyer, Gus Briner, G. Phillips, Geo. Campbell, H.M. Howard, Ward Bollinger, W. Murphy, W.R. Reaves, Paul Reh, Milo Hollister, and M. Van Elswyk.

The Dairyland Teachers have been Miss Carrie Pfau, Miss Mayme Brothers, Miss Helen Byfield, Miss Grace Dahlberg, Mrs. Ruby Jones, Miss Adelaide Dahlberg, Mrs. Crystal Knox, Mrs. Grace Trabue, Mrs. Vera Riggins, Miss Conroy, Mrs. L.J. McCoy, Mrs. Marian Carver, Mrs. Tuttle, Miss Mary Redden, Miss Dorothy Colwell, Miss A. Cunningham, Mrs. Gertrude Jorgenson, Miss Anna Johnson and Mrs. Olive Kelsay.

III. Organization of the Woman's Club and History

Whenever a few families settled near each other in a community, even though conditions were most unfavorable through poor roads, limited finances and isolated sections, yet the thought of proper schooling and some social intercourse become paramount needs.

On a parallel with the growth of the district was the growth of the Dairyland Ladies' Improvement Club. The organization meeting was held at the home of Mrs. L. McKean on the afternoon of October 21, 1915. Those present were Mrs. M.M. Dyer, Mrs. F.A. Briner, Mrs. L. McKean, Miss Lizzie McKean, Mrs. Mock, Mrs. H.H. Smith, Mrs. Frank Powell,

Mrs. H.J. Steeves, Miss Eva Knight and Mrs. A.W. Buffington.

Still residing in the district are Mrs. M.M. Dyer, and Mrs. A.W. Buffington. Mrs. F.A. Briner resides in Chowchilla since the death of Mr. Briner but is a frequent visitor here.

At this meeting held in 1915, Mrs. M.M. Dyer was elected president of the club, a position which she has held for many years and stills holds. Truly a long record of unselfish community service.

Mrs. A.W. Buffington was elected secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Briner vice-president.

The Preamble is worthy of a place in the history of Dairyland District.

Preamble

"In the course of modern development, we find the women are being greatly benefited in all communities where social and educational clubs have been formed. Realizing the women in the Dairyland section, are in need of such advantages, we have organized the Dairyland Ladies Improvement Club for the following purposes:

To secure a closer relationship among one another,

To apply the Golden Rule.

To discourage gossiping among social circles.

To teach our members the art of plain and fancy needlework.

To cooperate with teacher and trustees in school matters.

To unite in the solving of mothers' problems.

To educate our members in scientific cooking.

To teach the classification of foods.

To eliminate wasteful practices in home keeping.

To strive for harmony and good will among all mankind and sisterly love among ourselves.

To consider the laugh of innocent childhood, the sweat of honest labor, and the virtue of a happy home among the world's brightest jewels. "

In November several names had been added to the roll, among those were Mrs. Snelson and Mrs. Trabue. Mrs. Trabue came to the district as a bride and soon became active in community betterment. She has been a teacher in the Dairyland school system for a number of years. At the present, she is primary teacher on the teaching staff for 1938 and '39.

Other well known names that were added during 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919 and are still well known were Mrs. Salaberry, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Dougherty, Mrs. Hollister, Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Chester, Mrs. Colwell, Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Knight, Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Rice, Mrs. Swank, Mrs. Pratt, Mrs. Boyer, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Goodridge, Mrs. Ed Gross, Mrs. Haynes, Mrs. Reaves, Mrs. Knoblauch.

IV. War Relief Work

An interesting chapter in the work of the Dairyland Ladies Improvement Club that is closely allied with school activities is their War Relief work. This is a chapter of work, sacrifice and heartaches and surely the "blessings cast upon the waters will return after the many days" to this little band of unselfish, loyal women. Money was raised by programs, suppers, lunches sold at dances, and food sales. This money and the quantity of clothing made was given to the Red Cross or Belgian Relief Fund for distribution. In all of this work the school children and teachers assisted whenever possible.

V. Allied School and Club Activities

When the school was first organized it was held in a shed or building that was covered with galvanized iron. What merry times were enjoyed during heavy rain storms. No matter how high the teacher's voice was pitched it couldn't combat the steady rat-tat-tat of the raindrops on the roof.

The first teacher employed was Miss Pfau, a sister of Mrs. A. W. Buffington. The attendance averaged about 15 pupils. Now in 1938 the peak of attendance was 173 and five teachers were employed, Mrs. Gertrude Jorgenson, Prin., Miss Dorothy Colwell, Miss Anna Johnson, Mrs. Grace Trabue and Mrs. Olive Kelsay as an assistant in the Primary room.

On Novemeber 4, 1915, the Dairyland Ladies Improvement Club decided to cooperate with the school trustees in the building of a new school house. This was built in 1916

consisting of two rooms, one for a school room and the other an auditorium, also a kitchen which was generously furnished with a stove and set of dishes by the club women.

In December, 1915, the first community Christmas tree and treat was furnished to all the people of the district by the ladies. A warehouse on Mr. Kidd's ranch was chosen as the only available place for the Community Christmas. This became an established custom until 1936 when the attendance was ~~so~~ large, and the population of the district had increased so much it was found necessary to make other plans.

In the early spring of 1916, school funds were not sufficient to purchase play equipment so as usual, the Ladies Club supplied the want and purchased a basket ball and goals for the school. Mr Frazier donated the lumber for the goal posts.

On the evening of May 6, 1916, a dance was held in the school house, the proceeds to be devoted to a piano fund. This was added to from time to time by these energetic ladies and soon the school was fortunate in having a fine piano. This piano is still in use and was purchased by the School Board for the school some time later.

Ever alert to the needs of the school, the Ladies discussed the proper lighting of the school house with the trustees. As school funds were low, the Club gave a program and applied the proceeds to the school funds.

On April 6, 1918, a motion was made and seconded at a Club Meeting to build a platform in the school auditorium. This was done in a few weeks and much enjoyed by the school.

Map. 1

One of the most lasting monuments that his far-seeing group of women and trustees accomplished was the planting of the lovely Dairyland Park. For years we have had the only park on the school grounds of any rural school in Madera County. Now, other schools are planting parks that future generations will enjoy.

Rather an interesting side light is given in the minutes of the May 3rd, 1918, meeting. A program was being planned and a committee consisting of Mrs. Dyer was appointed to provide kerosane lamps to light the stage and auditorium.

About this same time curtains were purchased and made by the Ladies for the stage in the auditorium.

Other notable accomplishments of the Ladies Club for the good of the school and community have been the purchase of chairs, the flag and flag pole, piano tuning, and individual flags for the rooms. The club also furnished hot lunches for the school children.

VI. Interesting Reminiscences

Do you remember, Mr. Hollister, when you ferried the school children across the slough?

Do you remember, Mr. Phillips, when some doubted the wisdom of the school board in planting the park?

Do you remember, Mr. Dyer, when a little one room school with no room for community affairs was thought sufficient?

Do you remember, that the school well was an artesian well and has yet the purest water in the community?

Do you remember that Mr. Dyer plowed the first furrow in the colony and raised the first pumpkin vine?

Do you remember how much we appreciated Mrs. Meta Footman's kindness when she was Superintendent?

Do you remember that Robert Colwell attended Dairyland eight years, became interested in music, continued his studies at Chowchilla High and is now a University graduate and a music director in Arizona?

Do you remember that Reba Abicht was a Dairyland scholar who has also made good and is a director of Religious Education now?

Do you remember, Mr. Campbell, what splendid Farm Bureau meetings there used to be?

Do you remember the fine 4-H Clubs we had with the assistance of the Bollingers, Trabues, Mrs. Riggins

Mr. Noble and Miss Colwell, and the fine times we had?

Do you remember how the Ladies Improvement club has always helped wherever and whenever they could in community betterment?

Do you remember, boys, how hard Mr. Noble has worked to help you succeed in baseball?

Do you remember, boys and girls, how fortunate we have been in having a beautiful park and clean, cool, green, grass on which to play?

Do you remember, Old Timers, the joyous times had at the Community meetins when every one worked and played together?

Do you remember the Politcal Rallies held in the park when everypolitician talked his loudest and best?

Do you remember, teachers, the strain and stress of the Community Night programs?

VII. School Achievements

All schools in 1916 and 1917 strove toward an ideal called the Superior Standard school. Dairyland had complied with most of the requirements and had become a Standard School. At a meeting of the County Board which Mrs. M.M. Dyer attended, Dairyland had not attained the Superior rank. Immediately the members of the Ladies Club with the assistance of the Trustees completed the requirements---the serving of hot lunches and the installation of a standard Scale---and Dairyland became the first Superior Standard School in Madera County.

When the increased acreage was purchased for the school it was with the hope of making agricultural demonstrations. Under Mrs. Knox, splendid school gardens were planted and the produce sold by the pupils. Excellent exhibits of grapes have been sent to the County Fair.

In former years Dairyland has had the unique distinction of being the only rural school in the valley with a park, lawn, and spacious playgrounds. Many visitors have been brought here from the county office by Mr. Craig Cunningham and Mrs. Meta Footman. At one time Miss Helen Heffernan, of the State Office was a guest.

When the State Farm Bureau Conference met in the county they were entertained at Dairyland School on their tour of inspection. Mrs. M.M. Dyer and Mr. Geo. Campbell welcomed them. Unique souvenirs were given to the visitors, pictures of the school and a "boost" for it printed on the back, like the following:--



DAIRYLAND SCHOOL

Chowchilla, Madera Co., California

First Superior Standard School in County

Finest Grammar School Grounds in San Joaquin Valley

Ten acres in grounds.

2½ acres demonstration vineyard.

1 acre sycamore grove for Community Park

Lawn-----Trees-----Shrubs

Play ground with up-to-date play apparatus

Building used as Civic Center.

29 Cent School Tax

Good Soil----Good Water---Good Crops---

Good Folks

Come Again and Stay Longer

Dairyland Baseball Team has had many victories, though the personnel of the team changes with the changing years yet , the spirit remains the same. In 1937, the team won the Championship of the entire county. All rural and city schools are included in this contest.

In 1936, Dairyland won first place in the Track Meet held at Chowchilla. A beautiful redwood plaque was given for this honor.

Assemblies, which were conducted by the pupils and strictly under pupil government, were very popular. These developed initiative, leadership, confidence and ability in public speaking. These have had to be discontinued because there is no available room for them since the attendance has increased.

In May, 1937, a voluminous year book was published containing a record of the year's work and activities. This was a valuable souvenir and delighted all to whom it was given.

VIII. Industries

In the early years of the district, dairying was the most important industry, consequently a great deal of alfalfa was raised. Potatoes were a profitable crop also.

As the district progressed, grapes were planted and several fine vineyards were developed. There are still some of these vineyards producing good results.

Gradually the growing of cotton was introduced and in 1937 hundreds of acres were planted to this crop. The labor connected with cotton brought in many people who had been accustomed to this work. This had its good as well as bad effects on the school. Probably the peak of influx of migratory workers was reached in 1937 and 38 as the cotton reduction program has compelled growers to allow a certain percentage of their land to lay idle or grow other crops.

Two well-constructed gins, the Anderson and Claytons' and the Producers' were built here in 1937. This has materially increased the school tax fund. Telephone lines have been extended to the gins thereby linking the district to Madera and Chowchilla.

Several grocery stores and service stations were built also. These are forward steps in service to the community.

A splendid Grange Hall was erected by the local Grange organization and has been used for various

community activities including the school's Christmas and graduation programs. Mr. Paul Reh was Master of the Grange when it was organized and the Hall built. After he left Dairyland to make his home in Idaho, Mr. Grant was Master. At the present time Mr. Wells Oviatt is at the head of the organization.

IX. Looking Forward

Hereafter! O we need not waste
Our smiles or tears whate'er befall;
No happiness but holds a taste
Of something nobler, after all.
Old pioneers and new ones feel
An assurance of abiding trust
In the future God reveals
That makes us feel whatever
is, is just.

Robertson Boulevard

S.P. Railroad

Gin

Store

Slough

Bridge Berenda

Bridge

School Store

Store

Gin Lincoln Ave

Bridge

Dairyland

